assessment of tiger population is based on determining spatial occupancy of tigers throughout potential tiger forests and sampling such forests using camera traps in a statistical framework. This assessment is not comparable to the earlier total count using pugmarks owing to several shortcomings in the latter.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Reintroduction of tigers in Sariska Tiger Reserve has been planned in accordance with a proposal and commitment received from the State, emanating from a recovery strategy suggested by the Wildlife Institute of India, which, *inter-alia*, involves rehabilitation of villages from the core area. Based on the proposal received from State, an amount of Rs. 30.00 lakhs has been allocated so far in this regard, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger.

National plan of action on climate change

2691. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) by when the National Plan of Action on Climate change is going to be released and the emphasis his Ministry is giving in that;

(b) whether there are any plans before his Ministry for linking all academic institutions that work on climate change;

(c) if yes, the details of (a) and (b) above.

(d) whether any key knowledge institution have been identified apart from (b) above to make them the centres of excellence in climate change related research; and

(e) if so, the details thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) A high level coordination committee chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister called "Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change to coordinate National action for assessment, adaptation and mitigation of climate change" was constituted on 6th June, 2007. In the meeting held on 13th July, 2007, it has been deci ded to prepare and finalise 'India's Climate Change Action Programme' early.

The action programme proposes to identify and strengthen a network of knowledge institutions. This will also include the University system to become partner Institutions in the agenda for climate change.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Global study of Indian rivers

2692. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether world wildlife forum has conducted global study in regard to Indian rivers and has expressed concern on the process of drying these rivers;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps taken in this regard so far and the success made by Government as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) In a report entitled "World's top ten rivers at risk", the World Wildlife Fund, an International Non-Government Organisation (NGO), has listed the river Ganga as one of the World's ten rivers facing risk. The Central Government is not aware of the data-base and the methodology adopted by the said NGO for making this Report. The report profiles the biodiversity of river Ganga, and perceives over extraction of water for agriculture and excessive water diversions affecting natural flows as major threats to the river. The Report does not consider other Indian rivers as facing danger of getting dried up.

(c) The flows of river Ganga are being monitored by Central Water Commission (CWC) under the Ministry of Water Resources at various places on regular basis. There is no apparent reduction in the available water in river Ganga at its terminal point at Farakka Barrage even during the critical season. The CWC has formulated a Plan for water resources development in the country that envisages inter-linking of rivers for transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit basins for optimum utilization of water in the country. Under the National River Conservation Plan of the Ministry of Enviornment and Forests, various works are undertaken for pollution abatement in major rivers including Ganga through interception and diversion of sewage for its treatment and construction of Sewage Treatment Plants and Low Cost Sanitation. The National Environment Policy, 2006 also advocates and integrated approach for management of river basins by the concerned river authorities, ensuring maintenance of adequate flows, adherence to water quality standards throughout their course in all seasons and protection of land resources.

Forest cover

2693. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that forest cover is fact depleting especially in tribal areas;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the total hundreds of kilometres of forest cover loss as per latest Government study?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) As per the assessment of forest cover based on remote sensing made in 2005, the tribal districts have shown **a net decrease of 635 km²** as compared with assessment made in 2003, as per *'State of Forest Report* 2005'.

(b) The decrease in forest cover of tribal districts is mainly due to bamboo flowering in Nagaland (a decrease of 296 km²) and Manipur (a decrease of 173km²) and also due to shifting cultivation.

In Andaman and Nicobar the main reason of decrease (of 178 km²) in forest cover was the damage caused by Tsunami of December, 2004.

In MP three tribal districts (Dewas, East Nimar and Harda) showed a decrease of 157 km² due to submergence of area for construction of dams on the river Narmada (Indira Sagar and Omkareshwar dams).

(c) As per the assessment of forest cover based on remote sensing made in 2005, the total forest cover shown **a net decrease of 728 km²** as compared with assessment made in 2003, as per *'State of Forest Report* 2005'.